Purpose of High-Speed Train System

- Provide a new mode of high-speed intercity travel to link major metropolitan areas.
- Interface with international airports, mass transit and highways.
- Offer alternative transportation in a manner sensitive to and protective of the state's unique natural resources.
- Develop a practical and economically viable transportation system, with phased implementation that would generate revenues in excess of operations and maintenance costs.

Need for the High-Speed Train System

- Forecasted 40-50 percent state population growth by 2030.
- Increased demand for region-to-region transportation.
- Travel delays and traffic congestion on local highways and at airports at a cost of $20 billion per year.
- Poor and deteriorating air quality and pressure on natural resources as a result of expanded highways and airports.

System Benefits

High-speed trains will have many benefits.

- **Protecting our environment:** by eliminating more than 12 billion pounds of greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Reducing dependency on fossil fuels:** by decreasing use by up to 12.7 million barrels of oil per year.
- **Enhancing the economy:** by creating as many as 450,000 permanent jobs in California by 2035 through the anticipated economic growth brought by the train system.
- **Making better connections:** by providing a safer, faster and more cost-efficient alternative to air travel; helping to relieve overcrowding at local airports.
- **Improving existing infrastructure:** by removing existing at-grade crossings, installing fencing, new signaling systems and additional tracks.
- **Providing passenger cost savings:** by providing lower intercity passenger costs than travel by air or auto.

Environmental Issues to Be Analyzed Include

- Aesthetics & Visual Quality
- Agricultural Land
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources & Wetlands
- Construction Methods & Impacts
- Cultural Resources
- Cumulative & Secondary Impacts
- EMI/EMF
- Geology, Soils, Seismicity
- Hazardous Materials/Wastes
- Hydrology & Water Resources
- Local Growth, Station Planning & Land Use
- Mitigation Summary
- Noise & Vibration
- Parks, Recreation & Open Space
- Public Utilities & Energy
- Safety & Security
- Socioeconomics, Communities & Environmental Justice
- Transportation

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The California High-Speed Rail Authority is committed to updating and involving the public during the environmental review for the HST. There are a number of ways you can learn more and get involved.

Merced to Fresno Section

Call: 916-567-8072

Visit: www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov – See the Merced to Fresno page under the Library

E-Mail: MercedtoFresnoHST@circlepoint.com

Request a speaker: Please contact us if you are part of a community organization and would like a presentation or update at one of your meetings.

San Jose to Merced Section

Call: 800-881-5799

Email: highspeedrail@circlepoint.com

Visit: www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov – San Jose to Merced page under Library

Fresno to Bakersfield Section

Visit: www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov
Fresno – Bakersfield page under library tab

Para más información, por favor llame al 1-800-881-5799, o visite la Página Web www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov

如需索取本通知中文版，
請電詢加州高速鐵路局：1-800-881-5799

Để nghe đề nghị này bằng tiếng Việt, xin gọi: 1-800-881-5799

Merced to Fresno Section High-Speed Train Project EIR/EIS

Winter 2009/2010

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY

About the California High-Speed Train System

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) is proposing an 800 mile high-speed train system that would connect the San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento in the north, through the Central Valley to Los Angeles, Orange County and San Diego in the south. This fast, safe and reliable system is forecast to carry 93 million passengers annually by the year 2030. Comprehensive program-level environmental studies to determine overall route and station locations were completed in 2005 and 2008. The November 2008 California voter approval of $9.95 billion in bonds helped to move the program forward and project-specific environmental studies are now underway.

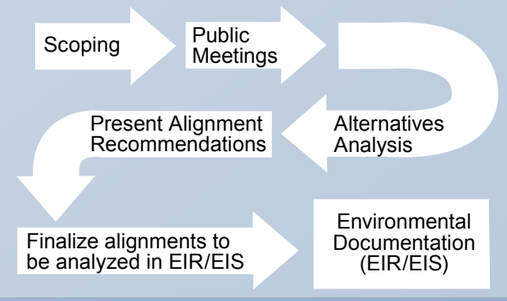
About the Merced to Fresno Section

The Merced to Fresno section of the High-Speed Train (HST) system is 60 miles long and includes the junction that permits high-speed trains to be routed either to Sacramento or San Francisco in the north. Proposed route alternatives generally follow either the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF), the Union Pacific (UP) railroads or a new alignment a few miles west of State Route (SR) 99 throughout the section. HST stations are proposed in Downtown Merced and Fresno and a heavy maintenance and repair facility will be evaluated in the Merced to Fresno HST project area. The Program Alignment is fully described in the Authority/Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Final Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the proposed High-Speed Train System located at www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov.

Environmental Review Process

In February 2009, the Authority, in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) began a project-level environmental review of the Merced to Fresno section per requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Environmental Review Process



In March 2009, scoping meetings were held to present the proposed Merced to Fresno Section program alignment and receive agency and public comments on the scope of issues that should be analyzed in the EIR/EIS. Comments gathered from these scoping meetings and through other means are documented in a Scoping Report. The comments were distilled to produce initial alignment alternatives and station and design options for consideration in an Alternatives Analysis (AA) Report. The initial alignment alternatives were then evaluated systematically using established criteria. An FRA/Authority workshop was conducted on October 13, 2009 to present results of the alternatives evaluation. At the workshop, the FRA and Authority provided recommendations for which alignment alternatives, stations, and design options should be carried forward into the more detailed EIR/EIS process. The results of the FRA/Authority workshop were presented to the Authority Board on December 3, 2009. The Authority Board directed staff to analyze the costs and economic impacts of the alignment alternatives in greater detail and to further evaluate alternative A4. The draft AA Report will be presented at public information meetings on December 17th. Based on comments received and additional analysis being undertaken, the report will then be refined and issued as the Final AA report. The Final AA Report will be presented to the Authority Board in February 2010. The map on the following pages summarize the results of the FRA/Authority workshop and Board directives.

Alternatives Analysis Report Criteria

The Alternatives Analysis Report documents the preliminary evaluation of alternatives, based on specific criteria, as noted below.

Objective	Criteria
Maximize ridership revenue potential	Minimize travel time
Maximize connectivity and accessibility	Intermodal connections
Minimize operating and capital costs	Minimize route length

Evaluation Measures

- Land use
- Construction feasibility
- Minimize disruption to neighborhoods & communities
- Minimize impacts to environmental resources
- Minimize impacts to natural resources

For additional details on the criteria used to narrow alignment alternatives and descriptions of the alignments withdrawn from further analysis, visit the Authority's Website at www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov.

Merced to Fresno Section – Alignment Alternatives